NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS
Quarterly Report

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"Tomorrow Will Be Too Late"

The Vice President of the National Council, Mr. Kenneth Chorley, gave one of many fine talks at the last annual meeting. The sentence that keynotes this editorial was his punch line, his final warning that the time for action is now, not tomorrow.

The National Council has passed through its formative period. To many of the members this seemed an interminable period of delay. Some members were impatient. Behind the scenes, however, the Council has been active and its intercession in several cases has been successful.

But it is not what is past that is now important. It is the future of the National Council that concerns us. We would like to turn to our plans for the immediate future and - most important of all - enlist your aid.

Although we have received some very generous contributions for the present, without additional financial backing the Council will not be able either to continue its present work or to meet new emergencies. Therefore, the primary effort during the next few months must be to gain financial support. Two members of our staff, Mr. F. L. Rath, Jr., and Mr. Ralph P. Wentworth, will be responsible for the personal contacts necessary in such work. Donations will be sought from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Many of you can help them by supplying names and letters of introduction. It may be that you can take the initiative. Some members already have.

Large donations are important for the near future and for particular projects. But annual memberships will be the continuing source of regular income. Within the next several weeks we shall be mailing invitations to join the National Council to a relatively small list of names. Most of these names have come from our members, although it is unfortunately true that more than half of them have forgotten to send in their lists. Literature is now being printed. Copies will be sent to you and you may have more upon request. We need your help to build up the dues-paying membership of the National Council to the point where we have a source of steady income.

The Council can point to its record thus far with pride. Much good has been established. But something more is needed to reach the goals you have established. These goals include cooperation with the National Park Service in correlating data on historic sites, accumulation of information in response to many inquiries received, and such assistance as may be requested in establishing the National Trust.

A century ago Henry David Thoreau said, "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost: that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them." The castle is built, but only part of the foundation is down. You should hold yourself responsible in part for completing that foundation.

A. S. Gaw

President
National Council for
Historic Sites and Buildings

Annual Meeting: The second annual meeting was held at the National Gallery of Art, November 4 and 5, 1948. The attendance at all sessions was excellent. There were 108 registrants; 37 of them represented societies, organizations, or Governmental bureaus that are a part of the National Council. Delegates came from as far as the State of Oregon.

Digests of all of the major talks, except one, are attached as a Supplement to this Report. Because they were uniformly good, synthesis has been difficult, but the principal ideas propounded, as expressed in the digests, will be worth the time and attention of all members. No attempt has been made to present the speech given by Mr. Charles D. Maginnis at the annual dinner, because arrangements are being made to have it printed in its entirety and it will be distributed at some future time.

During the course of the first day's sessions, in addition to the digested material, there were other reports. Dr. Guy Stanton Ford, a member of the Committee on Standards and Surveys, in the absence of Dr. Waldo G. Leland, Chairman, presented a report on criteria for the selection of sites and buildings for preservation. These criteria, which were adopted at the meeting, were distributed then; copies are still available for those members who did not secure them. Commander Keith Merrill, who had been acting as interim Treasurer for the National Council, was formally elected to that office and reported a balance of $5,096.13 at the end of October.

Mr. James R. Edmunds, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, presented a report emphasizing the need to stabilize the financial position of the National Council. By vote of the delegates assembled, it was decided that the Bylaws should be amended to include the following classes of paid memberships: Life Members, $1,000 or more in one payment; Sustaining Members, $100 or more annually; Contributing Members, $25 or more annually; Active Members, $10 or more annually. It was also decided that all Associates elected on or before November 5, 1948, will be considered Charter Associates and will not be required to pay dues. Organizations elected as Affiliates of the Council after November 5, 1948, will be required to pay annual dues of $25 and may become Sustaining Members on payment of $100 or more annually.

Other events of the first day's session included lunch at the National Gallery, as guests of the Chairman of the Executive Board, Mr. David E. Finley, and the presentation of motion pictures by Mr. Laurence B. Fletcher, Executive Secretary of The Trustees for Public Reservations in Massachusetts.

The annual dinner was held at the Hotel Statler. General Grant, President of the National Council, was master of ceremonies. Ambassador Henri Bonnet, Miss Nancy V. McClelland, and Mr. Charles D. Maginnis offered varied and interesting talks to an audience of more than one hundred.

Three of the talks delivered on the second morning, including a forthright statement by Mr. Kenneth B. Chorley, are among those presented in digested form. The Nominating Committee, which will present the slate of officers at the 1949 annual meeting, was re-elected unanimously; it consists of Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Mrs. Richard B. Wigglesworth, Frederick Johnson, Robert Garrett, and Luther Evans. Mr. Chorley invited the National Council to hold its next annual meeting in the fall of 1949 in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The remainder of the meeting was taken up with reports from the floor. Particular projects, news of interest, and progress made in the field of preservation in many sections of the country were mentioned by delegates, members, or guests. It will not be possible to summarize these talks, but the speakers and their topics included:

Mr. George M. Morris, who presented a case history of a current preservation project, Woodlawn; Mr. Louis Jones, who gave notice of the Seminar on Preservation and Interpretation that will be held by the New York State Historical Association in Cooperstown, New York, in July; Dr. Christopher Crittenden, who told about the restoration of Tryon's Palace in New Bern, North Carolina; Mr. David Duniway, who summarized the preservation activities on the West Coast; Mr. Charles van Ravenswaay, who reported on the Middle West; Mr. Albert Corey, who pointed to particular preservation problems in the State of New York; Mr. Joseph Downes, who told of the interests of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum in New York City; Mr. Norman Wilkinson, who presented a statement about the situation in Pennsylvania; and Mrs. Francis B. Crowninshield, who spoke briefly about the project at New Castle, Delaware.

The January issue of Antiques magazine contains a provocative editorial that deals with the National Council. It is followed by a 10-page section entitled "History in Houses: Preserving our Past Across the Nation," dealing with preservations in Saugus, Massachusetts, Lebanon, Ohio, Little Rock, Arkansas, and Georgetown, Colorado.

Public Relations Program: The part-time services of Mr. Ralph P. Wentworth as Public Relations Consultant have been made available by a generous anonymous gift. A "Proposed Program for Public Information and Fund Raising" has been submitted to the Chairman of the Committee on Information, Mr. Albert Kornfeld. He will initiate action on certain phases of it in the near future. The Executive Board, meeting in Washington, on February 18th, heard Mr. Wentworth's analysis and gave approval to his primary recommendations. The new literature that has been prepared and is being printed at the present time includes a Facts Sheet, designed to give pertinent information about the Council in brief form. Our first publication, "Preserving America's Heritage of Historic Sites and Buildings," has been revised and is also being reprinted to meet the increasing demand. Other basic literature will be prepared from time to time, when funds are available.

As General Grant mentioned in his editorial, the primary emphasis at this time must be upon the fund-raising aspects of our program. Only then shall we be able to deal successfully with the broad program of information and public education.

Charter Associates and member organizations have voluntarily contributed $5,615 to the National Council, in response to the recent appeal. Four life memberships have brought our permanent fund to $4,000. In addition, there has been one special life membership of $5,000. Further contributions will be most welcome.

Department of the Interior Request for Cooperation: In mid-February General Grant received a thoughtful and interesting letter from the Secretary of the Interior, J. A. Krug. The Secretary remarked on his interest in the founding of the National Council

and its growth. He pointed out its potential influence on the preservation and public appreciation of endangered monuments of American history and culture. He then asked the National Council for recommendations regarding the completion of an adequate nationwide survey of historic sites and buildings. He propounded a series of considerations regarding the importance of a national inventory, the desirability of a resumption of a Federal survey program, the extent of possible support likely to be made available by national, state, and local preservation organizations engaged in parallel surveys, the comparison between any recommended American program and similar foreign inventories, and the desirability of publishing the results.

The Executive Board considered this request and referred it to the Committee on Standards and Surveys, to work out in cooperation with the National Park Service.

Miss Frances Benjamin Johnston, renowned photographer of historic houses and Charter Associate in the National Council, has presented some interesting volumes to the Council Library. They include a complete file, volumes I through IX, of "The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs," and an incomplete file, 1932 through 1940, of "Pencil Points."

Seminar on the Restoration of Historic Buildings: The New York State Historical Association is again planning a seminar program in July. Last summer, in Cooperstown, New York, the Association Headquarters, the seminars offer included "Writing Local History," "Teaching State and Local History," "Early Arts and Crafts," "History in Museums," and "Folklore." The curriculum for this summer's course has not yet been announced. Further information may be secured from Louis C. Jones, Director, New York State Historical Association, Cooperstown, New York.

The National Council will be represented at the Seminar, in response to the invitation of the Director, who very kindly noted: "Certainly the organization of the Council is the most important single event in the whole field of restoration in the last ten years and it is important that not only people concerned with restoration understand its purposes and functions but that all people interested in the history of this country have the same advantage." Further information about the program will be given in the next issue of the Quarterly Report.

Mr. Ronald F. Lee, Secretary of the National Council, spoke before the annual meeting of the North Carolina Society for the Preservation of Antiquities in December. He described the organization and development of the National Council at the Society's Luncheon. Later he noted that the enthusiasm and active progress in preservation marking the Society's program indicates that North Carolina is moving toward a position well forward among preservation organizations throughout the country.

National Park Service Studies of Surplus Historic Forts Continue: Under Public Law 616, strongly endorsed to Congress last year by the National Council, the Federal program for disposing of surplus historic forts to state and municipal authorities friendly to their preservation continues. On December 31, 1948, upon the recommendation of the National Park Service, the War Assets Administration authorized the transfer of Fort Wayne, Detroit, a four-bastioned work of solid masonry overlooking the Detroit River, and the principal historic landmark of the Michigan city, to the City for preservation and public use as an historic monument. On January 17, the National Park Service recommended similar action to the WAA in regard to a portion of the former Fort Popham Military Reservation at Phillipsburg, Maine. When completed, this transfer will round out the boundaries of the Fort Popham Memorial or State Park, which was established in 1924 and embraces the remains of old Fort Popham, a half-moon-shaped granite fortification begun in 1861 but never completed. Nine other surplus properties requested in whole or in part for historic monument purposes are under study by the National Park Service, including Fort Moultrie, South Carolina; Fort Columbia, Washington; Jefferson Barracks, Missouri; and Fort McDowell, California.

Mr. Albert Kornfeld, Editor of House and Garden and Chairman of the Council's Committee on Information, will represent the Council at the annual meeting of the American Institute of Decorators, one of our Constituent Organizations. The meeting will be held March 21-23 in New York City.

Prospects Brighten for Salvage Archeology Program: Although the construction of dams in the river basins of the United States has been accelerated to such an extent that important prehistoric Indian sites such as the Center Hill Reservoir in Tennessee are currently passing under water and will be permanently lost, nevertheless the general prospects for this major scientific recovery program are brightening somewhat. The Federal budget for the coming fiscal year, beginning July 1, includes approximately $300,000 for the continuation of the joint National Park Service and Smithsonian Institution archeological surveys, and for the initiation of excavations of major prehistoric sites. Reservoirs where unique and irreplaceable archeological data will be recovered, if these funds are voted by Congress, include Oahe and Fort Randall, South Dakota; Yellowtail, Montana and Wyoming; Bald Hill and Garrison, North Dakota; McNary, Washington; and Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.

Mr. David E. Finley's speech at the annual meeting of the National Council last fall was printed in full in the January issue of the Journal of The American Institute of Architects, and again in The Congressional Record on February 21. The "Report of the Committee on the Organization of the National Trust" was reproduced in the January issue of Landscape Architecture: A Quarterly. A limited number of reprints of both articles are available upon request to the Executive Office.

Woodlawn Saved: The effort to save Woodlawn, the Nellie Custis Lewis home, which stands on a portion of the original Mount Vernon estate outside of Alexandria, Virginia,

culminated in success on February 22nd. Since last August a relatively small group of able and interested persons, under the leadership of Mr. George M. Morris, former President of the American Bar Association, and Mr. Armistead Rood, a Department of Justice attorney who became fired with the idea of saving the estate for the benefit of the public, worked hard to effect its purchase. Important in the raising of the funds was the offer of the Old Dominion Foundation, which, from December 20, 1948, matched all donations on a two-for-one basis.

There are two important points to be made about this operation. First, money is still needed for the paying off of a mortgage, which had to be taken out in the final stages of the campaign. Funds are still being raised and contributions may be sent to Woodlawn Public Foundation, Inc., 511 - 10th Street, N. W., Washington 4, D. C. The second point concerns the lesson to be learned from the campaign. It demonstrates what can be done when a preservation effort is prosecuted energetically and intelligently. Most of the men and women who worked so laboriously had no prior experience in this type of campaign, but they secured expert advice and refused to consider defeat.

The National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings played only a minor role in the campaign. Mr. David E. Finley, Mrs. Dwight Davis, and General Grant served on the Board of Trustees. Advice was given at various stages. Office space was shared with the Foundation. Perhaps it is of some importance that the Council could assist in any way at this time. Certainly the way is pointed to future cooperation with other similar ventures in preservation. The conduct of such a campaign is a technical proceeding, demanding some expert guidance. The National Council hopes to be able to supply that guidance when and where needed. It can do this in at least two ways. First, by the preparation of a technical kit, offering illustrative material in the laying out of such a campaign. Second, when the staff is sufficiently large, by the lending out of personnel to lay the groundwork and offer technical advice regarding preservation. There is a need for such services throughout the country, as the Woodlawn campaign clearly demonstrated.

At the request of interested citizens of Santa Fe, New Mexico, General Grant wrote a letter to the President of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, regarding the Lamy House, An historic house in danger of destruction and on railroad-owned land. No word has been received as yet as to the disposition of the property, but the effect of the intercession, it is said, was excellent.

The National Trust: The final report on the creation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States was presented by the chairman of the Committee, H. Alexander Smith, Jr., to the Executive Board on February 18 and was unanimously approved. It is understood that a bill incorporating the findings of the Committee is being considered by the Department of the Interior. Should legislation be introduced into the Congress, official notification, together with copies of the proposed bill, will be sent to all members.

The Plimoth Plantation, Inc., has issued its first brochure on "The Pilgrim Memorial" in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It announces the acquisition of land for the proposed restoration, the erection of a replica of a typical First House near Plymouth

Rock, historical and archeological studies during 1949, the construction of a scale model of the Plantation, and the conducting of a fund raising campaign.

Hampton National Historic Site: In December the Avalon Foundation presented an additional gift of $40,000 to the United States for further restoration and improvement work at "Hampton," the former Ridgeley home near Towson, Maryland. In addition to this outright grant, the Foundation also offered to match dollar for dollar any amount to a total of $18,000, which may be raised either in funds or services, for grounds improvement and landscape treatment of Hampton and its gardens. This generosity brings much nearer the day when repairs will be completed by the National Park Service and Hampton opened for permanent exhibition to the public by the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities.

The 1949 annual meeting of the National Council will be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, probably during the first two weeks in October. Arrangements are being made currently and the exact dates of the two-day meeting will be set in the near future. A Program Committee will also be appointed for this first meeting outside of Washington, D.C.

Course in Preservation and Interpretation: The American University's School of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, Washington, D. C., will offer as a part of its 1949 summer session an intensive Institute in the Preservation and Interpretation of Historic Sites and Buildings. The Institute, open to a limited number of qualified students, will be in session for three weeks beginning June 6 and will be offered in cooperation with the National Park Service and Colonial Williamsburg, Inc. Two of the three weeks will be spent in Washington and the final week in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The Institute is designed to introduce students to important phases of preservation and restoration work, such as the growth of the preservation idea, criteria for the selection of sites and buildings worthy of preservation, research techniques, preservation and restoration policies and procedures, and the exhibition and administration of historical monuments. In addition to lectures and seminar meetings the Institute will include field trips to some of the more notable restoration projects in the vicinity of Washington and Williamsburg. Instructors will be from the staffs of The American University, the National Park Service, and Colonial Williamsburg, Inc. The program will be conducted by Mr. Ronald F. Lee, Chief Historian of the National Park Service and Secretary of the National Council, and Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Educational Director of Colonial Williamsburg. Dr. Donald Derby, of The American University, will serve as Coordinator of the Institute for the University. Literature about the course will soon be available. Copies of it, together with applications, may be secured from Dr. Derby, 1901 F Street N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

The Monterey Foundation, California, and the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio are recent additions to the list of Affiliates of the National Council. Letters of invitation to state and local societies in all parts of the country will be going out shortly.

Castle Clinton Fight Continues: A notable decision in regard to Castle Clinton was handed down by Justice Joseph Null, of the New York State Supreme Court, on December 10th. In the action of Hamilton v. Moses, the latter was restrained from demolishing Castle Clinton unless he first procure the formal approval of the Art Commission of the State of New York. Because of the general interest in this long-protracted fight, a copy of the complete decision is enclosed with this Report. Briefs have since been filed in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

In response to an editorial in the New York Herald Tribune early in January, General Grant explained the position maintained by the National Council. A portion of this letter is quoted here so that all members will know the stand that has been taken.

> As your editorial implies, the two requirements - the best development of the city and the preservation of a few milestones from the past - are not mutually exclusive. We should remember that the principal proponents of preservation are not crackpots who revere and want to save everything from our past. Preservation today pre-supposes selection on the basis of criteria carefully considered and applied - at least, such criteria are the guides adopted by the above-mentioned organizations [the National Council and the American Planning and Civic Association]. There are antiquarians, to be sure, who would save everything to satisfy an innate craving, but they are a vanishing race.
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> In their place you will find men and women throughout the country who believe that there are lessons to be learned from certain relics of the past and that those lessons may be learned best in the sites where history took place. Castle Clinton falls into this category. By reason of its location it is a "natural." Given proper treatment, it can be preserved without doing violence to the city's plans. It now appeals to the thoughtful to be saved.
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> It is important that in years to come millions of visitors will have in it a vivid reminder of our greatest city's past. There is enough history still clinging to those old walls for imaginative interpretation to recreate our yesterdays and visualize the city of early days as compared with that which now looks down upon them.
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> Such will be its principal function in years to come: to remind us of the steady progression of our history. Judge Null ... offered justification (if justification is needed) for this concept of preservation: "A people indifferent to the landmarks and monuments of its past will not long retain its capacity to achieve an honored future."

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With this issue the former Newsletter becomes a Quarterly Report that will be distributed in March, June, September, and December of each year. Its format remains virtually unchanged, but changes will be made in the future, when more funds are available for publication. Items for inclusion in future Reports may be sent to the Executive Secretary, National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings, 511 - 10th Street, N.W., Washington 4, D. C.